

O'Connor and Kitto both assign the purpose of the April 28 meeting squarely to the Hudson issue, and their hope that Fowler would contact the White House and cause it to intercede with Interior so that DOI would pay heed to the opponent tribes' arguments. O'Connor testified before the House Committee on Government Reform & Oversight that he specifically was targeting Ickes as the person he wanted Fowler to call, and further hoped that this intercession might yield a meeting for O'Connor and his clients with Ickes directly.²³⁴

Among the 12 known participants in the April 28 meeting, there are significant differences of recollection on certain important issues. Indeed, even the authors of notes and roughly contemporaneous memoranda about the event have present recollections that sometimes conflict with their own prior writings. One central witness to the events – Larry Kitto – has since died. Nonetheless, certain predominant themes emerge from the available record and recollections of the meeting.

Most witnesses, including Fowler, recall that he greeted the large group after their arrival and met with them in his office, joined by Mercer. Fowler opened the meeting by expressing his interest in hearing the group's concerns, and thanking their representative, O'Connor, for bringing them to see him. Fowler was receptive, responsive and attentive, taking notes through much of the discussion. From the outset of the meeting, Fowler acknowledges that he understood that the group wanted him to call the White House and Interior on their behalf.

O'Connor and Kitto proceeded to introduce the tribal leaders and their representatives. According to most of the meeting participants, O'Connor either stressed or said words to the

²³⁴In statements to investigators on this issue, O'Connor backed away from the certainty of his prior testimony. Sikorski recalls, however, that prior to the April 28 meeting, Kitto had said O'Connor would be trying to contact Ickes about the Hudson matter.